# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

| 1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 17-05-2004 | 2. REPORT TYPE FINAL | 3. DATES COVERED (From - To) |
|---|---|---|

| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE | 5a. CONTRACT NUMBER |
|---|---|
| RELIGION AS A DIMENSION OF THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM | |
| | 5b. GRANT NUMBER |
| | 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER |
| **6. AUTHOR(S)** | 5d. PROJECT NUMBER |
| CDR GARY P. WEEDEN  CHC, USN | 5e. TASK NUMBER |
| Paper Advisor (if Any): **CDR TIMOTHY J. DEMY** | 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER |

| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER |
|---|---|
| Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207 | |

| 9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) | 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) |
|---|---|
| | 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) |

**12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**
Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.

**13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES** A paper submitted to the faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department.  The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.

**14. ABSTRACT**

Religion has historically been misunderstood as a factor in strategic analysis and military operations. On the battlefield of this current Global War on Terrorism, religion has emerged as the new face that makes for a trans-national threat. The enemy embraces a much different ideology than the enemy of the Cold War. Armed with a divine mandate and fueled by anger, Islamic militants have an exclusive strategy and a powerful message.

The recognition and consideration of religion as a dimension in this war is critical for the Combatant Commander's battlefield assessment. Exploring the religious dimension will enhance the cultural intelligence gathering and reduce the vulnerability in strategic planning and operations.

**15. SUBJECT TERMS**
ISLAMIC MILITANTS, IDEOLOGY, RELIGION, CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

| 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: | | | 17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT | 18. NUMBER OF PAGES | 19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Dept |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED | b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED | c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED | | 22 | 19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556 |

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE**
Newport, RI


**RELIGION AS A DIMENSION OF THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM**


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**A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**


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**17 May 2004**


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**Abstract**


**RELIGION AS A DIMENSION OF THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM**


Religion has historically been misunderstood as a factor in strategic analysis and military operations. On the battlefield of this current Global War on Terrorism, religion has emerged as the new face that makes for a trans-national threat. The enemy embraces a much different ideology than the enemy of the Cold War. Armed with a divine mandate and fueled by anger, Islamic militants have an exclusive strategy and a powerful message.

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**RELIGION AS A DIMENSION OF THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM**

Those who neglect religion in their analysis of contemporary affairs do so at great peril.[1]

## I) Introduction

The thesis of this paper is that understanding the growing influence of religious

diversity, ideology, history, and elements of religious militancy in relationship with

nationalism will enhance the Combatant Commander's (COCOM) strategic thought and

planning for the irregular warfare of terrorism. Religion has become a force-multiplier for

the Islamic militant seeking to unite other Muslims into waging war.

While intelligence analysis seeks to mitigate the miscalculations and

vulnerabilities that are embedded in any strategic planning, the analysis of the religious

dimension must become a vital element of information gathering in the Global War on

Terrorism. Religion is a critical influence in forging nationalism, shaping a new identity

and fueling a call to a spiritual battle with a divine mandate. As intelligence analyst

Jeffrey White observes:

> In a political-geographical microclimate like those in Lebanon, Somalia, or
> Kurdistan, understanding is elusive. Shifting patterns of family, tribal, religious,
> economic, and military relations overlaid on specific geography produce a
> complex, dynamic, and uncertain analytical environment—one likely to make
> intelligence analysts cautious and policymakers and commanders uncomfortable
> and vulnerable.[2]

The scope of this paper will address the necessity of considering religion as a dimension

to enhance the strategic analysis within the Global War on Terrorism. Specific thought

will be given to the Islamic diversity and ideology as it relates to Islamic militants.

## II) A New Face on the Battlefield

In an address to the Joint Session of Congress and the American public, 20 September 2001, President Bush declared a war on terrorism. The President specifically postured the military to be ready. The parameters of this war were further defined in the statement, "Our war on terror begins with al-Qaida, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."[3] Implicit in the address was a "global reach" mandate initially targeting "Islamic extremism" which included such groups as al-Qaida, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Although the President previously stated on numerous occasions that the United States is not at war with Islam, religion was a theme highlighted over thirty times throughout the speech. Was the President characterizing a war with strong religious dimensions and specifically a war against Islamic forces? In theorizing the elements of war, Carl von Clausewitz emphasized:

> The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by the test the kind of war on which they are embarking, neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.[4]

This art involved in waging a war on terrorism is challenging for both the statesman and Combatant Commander given the strong religious dimension. The Combatant Commander must never lose sight of the religious dimension of the Global War on Terrorism. While it is not the most immediate concern for operations, it remains a strong undercurrent that shapes and motivates the actions of many terrorists. There are distinctions between religious wars and wars justified by religion and although the United States does not view the war as a religious war, the terrorists do. For the targeted enemy

this is a holy war where the "Muslim extremists are determined to remain involved with us."[5] From the collective interview of religious militants, terrorism expert Mark Juergensmeyer notes: "Almost to a person, they [militants] think of themselves as soldiers in a war—an invisible war; and through these acts they are trying to wake us up to their view of a world at war."[6]

However, the course of action set for the United States is to wage war against the radical factions of Islam and governments that support terrorism. The sensitivity towards Muslims in defining the boundary of this war was evident when the original title of "Operation Infinite Justice," traced back to the 1998 Operation Infinite Reach, was changed to Operation Enduring Freedom on Sept. 25, 2001. For the Department of Defense, Joint Pub 1-02, September 2003, provides a definition of terrorism: "The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological."

Though categorically nationalist terrorists, including the Basque Fatherland, Liberty (ETA), and Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), are separate from religious terrorists and even ideological terrorists, politics, religion and ideology are fused together in the minds of many of the targeted enemy. Apocalyptic vision is wedded to the ideology and seeks a political change. For many of the terrorists, the acts they perform stem from deep religious connotations and a belief that they are acting from a divine mandate. These actions serve in part to unite forces against the West.

Knowledge of the enemy is critical to war. An army of religious extremists makes this war distinct from previous wars in that they are less predictable, more diverse, more

willing to engage in martyrdom and not always aligned with a government hierarchy.[7] Ralph Peters observes that this "New Warrior Class" is "habituated to violence, with no stake in civil order. Unlike soldiers, warriors do not play by our rules, do not respect treaties, and do not obey orders they do not like."[8]

One of the foremost U.S. terrorism experts, Jessica Stern, notes, "The terrorism we are fighting is a seductive idea, not a military target."[9] This seductive ideology is a critical aspect of this war and is carried out in terms of a cosmic warfare where religious convictions are dominant.[10] Though the old Cold War ideology has been dismantled, it has been supplanted by what Mark Juergensmeyer titled *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State.*[11]  The Combatant Commander must understand the implications related to how the enemy views this as a religious war where the historical, social and political planes become a battlefield and "Allah is the strategist and God manipulates the battle."[12] Religion is a force to contend with, especially in failed-states where it has "become the primary vehicle for protest against failing secular states."[13] In a religious war:

> Reason and logic might be adhered to; therefore, planners and strategists must consider unorthodox as well as rational course of action for the potential adversaries. Once a cause is elevated to the level of a spiritual struggle, a new logic and perspective prevails.[14]

### III) Religion and Strategic Thought

Religious analysis has not always been factored into the estimate of a situation, especially as it relates to current trends and future possibilities. Clarifying the situation in order to develop strategic plans for the Global War on Terrorism must include the religious factor. Douglas Johnston emphasizes:

The challenge is to understand the complexities of a given conflict situation and determine the kind of involvement that is needed at any point in time. In making such a determination, however, it is important to remember, the critical and often overpowering constraints imposed by the associated political, economic, and security factors. An approximate and favorable congruency on these fronts is often an essential prerequisite to effective spiritual or religious contribution.[15]

Historical Miscalculations

Historically religion, an unmistakable force in war, peace and national identity, has never gained a serious consideration in strategic analysis as root cause in crisis. The posture often taken was to ignore, minimize or inaccurately portray the religious factor. The influential works of Hans Morgenthau on strategic thought dismissed religion as a weaker force in uniting and identifying a nation.[16] The notion of divine intervention, divine mandate, or religious motivation in a secular world tends to be incongruent with the common explanations of the human crisis. Evident from the earliest analysis, Edward Luttwak noted, "Both Thucydides and Tacitus, among lesser lights, freely invoked geographic, economic, psychological, social, and technical primary causes to explain the course of human events."[17] The eighteenth-century and the Age of Enlightenment further defined religious causes and motivations as only a phenomenon masking other factors.[18] The Enlightenment devalued and diminished the significance of the role of religion, creating a jaundiced perspective that continues to the present. Luttwak states:

Despite the prevailing intellectual view, religion, of course, continued to play a large role in the lives of individuals and societies. Thus began an extraordinary separation between those who studied politics and those who engaged in the practice of politics, the conduct of war and diplomacy, and the acts of everyday life. . . . Policymakers, diplomats, journalists, and scholars who are ready to overinterpret economic causality, who are apt to dissect social differentiations most finely, and who will minutely categorize political affiliations are still in the

habit of disregarding the role of religion, religious institutions and religious motivation in explaining politics and conflicts.[19]

This attitude is prevalent in strategic thought and planning of the United States. The notion of the separation of church and state has pervaded the thought of America since its founding and this dichotomy has shaped the perception of religion.[20] Yet, much of the world and many of our adversaries do not make this dichotomy. Douglas Johnston elaborates on this limited view: "Foreign policy practitioners in the United States, for example, are inadequately equipped to deal with situations involving other nation-states where the imperative of religious doctrine blend intimately with those of politics and economics." [21]

The consequences of wrongly assessing security and the components of conflicts can be disastrous. The result of this misunderstanding was evident in the 1979 Iran Revolution and the Ayatollah revolt against "Westoxification."  The CIA failed to account for the importance of the religious dimension and defined the conflict in conventional thinking.  When suggested that the religious situation should be monitored, it was "vetoed on the grounds that it would amount to mere 'sociology,' a term used in intelligence circles to mean the time-wasting study of factors deemed politically irrelevant."[22]  Consequently, as John Esposito observed, "Iran's Islamic revolution of 1978-1979 abruptly detoured the march toward Western modernization….Islamic revivalism produced a wave of fundamentalist movements from Egypt, Sudan, and Iran to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Malaysia."[23] Unfortunately, the 1983 Beirut bombing of the Marine barracks once again revealed that religion was a missing dimension in understanding the situation. Following this terrorist attack, diplomatic correspondent

Robin Wright noted: "Scapegoats within the military were found. . . . But the internal reprimands served only to prove that the U.S. and its Western allies still did not understand the dimension of this new phenomenon. . . . The U.S. and others search desperately for name and a structure behind the invisible force."[24]

<div align="center">Religion and Nationalism</div>

As many of the old boundaries, defined by colonialism or the Cold War, unraveled, religious motivated movements sought to redefine the nation-states' identity. This is what Gertrude Himmelfarb has called "the dark and bloody crossroads where nationalism and religion meet."[25] Religious identity, values and loyalties seek to replace the emptiness of secularism. In observing this phenomenon, Mark Juergensmeyer states:

> There has been a religious connection to virtually every other case of public violence in recent years. Clearly, the rise of religious nationalism around the world has created a threat to global security. By fueling terrorist assaults, supporters of religious nationalist movement toppled political regimes, altered the outcome of elections, strained relations between nations, and made the world dangerous for international travel.[26]

The growing revolt of religious militant groups is in opposition to modernity, secularism, and Western influence along with the perceived emptiness of the moral and spiritual values of secular nationalism.[27] This struggle is at the core of the opposition not only against Western powers, but against secularism and modernity in the Arab world. All secular political perspectives and frameworks other than the divine are abandoned in favor of a religious state.[28] This abandonment gives impetus for religious terrorism as these movements seek to attain and maintain autonomy. Mark Juergensmeyer observed the growing influence of religious nationalists:

> In the absence of any other demarcation, these old staples—religion, ethnicity, and traditional culture—have become resources for national identification. Consequently, religious and ethnic nationalism has provided a solution in the

contemporary political climate to the perceived insufficiencies of Western-style secular politics…. What is significant about these ethno-religious movements is their creativity—not just of their use of technology and mass media, but also their appropriation of national and global networks.[29]

Human destruction and war are historically connected with religious intolerance between nations, within nations and within religions.[30] Samuel Huntington, former National Security Council advisor, espouses the theory of cultural fault lines and disintegration in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. In that work he asserted:

> Of all the objective elements which define civilization, however, the most important usually is religion…. The world's major civilizations in human history have been closely identified with the world's great religions, and people who share ethnicity and language, but differ in religion may slaughter one another.[31]

Though a controversial theory, Huntington's work stressed the importance of identifying religious clashes and the religious dimension, especially in assessing future security issues. Huntington identified Islam's strong opposition to western economic and cultural globalization, and specifically, perception of American imperialism. For the Islamic militant the fight is a spiritual obligation and past disputes are raised to a spiritual level. Jack Miles elaborates:

> The border separating what Muslims call *dar al-islam,* the "House of Submission (Islam)," from *dar al-harb,* the "House of Warfare" seems increasingly to define a long irregular battlefront, one that as of September 11, 2001, stretches across four continents. With striking frequency, those post-Cold War conflicts typically termed "local" or "parochial" or at most "sectarian" turn out to be battles between historically Muslim and historically non-Muslim populations.[32]

A short list of these recent conflicts involving Islam include Algeria, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo, Chechnya, Cyprus, Eritrea, Israel/Palestine, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Nigeria, Philippines, Sudan, Uganda.[33] Religious activism has

stepped into these regions to define a new self-identity, authenticity and community. [34]

This religious activism has become "a movement of anti-globalization with its own

global vision."[35] This transnational view spreads as fighting seeks to unify the message.

This trend will continue and give rise to future terrorism as, "The decay of the nation-

state and disillusionment with old forms of secular nationalism have produced the

opportunity and need for nationalism."[36] It is incumbent for strategic planners to

recognize the circular causality of religion exclusivism to nationalism and terrorism.

### IV) Analyzing Religious Dimensions

Understanding religion as a dimension, especially Islamic militants, increases the

intelligence of the enemy's ends and ways, thus reducing vulnerabilities in planning as

emphasized in Joint Pub 1-05:

> Religion plays a pivotal role in the self-understanding of many people and has a
> significant effect on the goals, objectives, and structure of society. In some cases,
> religious self-understanding may play a determinative or regulating role on
> policy, strategy, or tactics.[37]

A strategic consideration for the war on terrorism must include examining unstable

environments and understanding as Paul Marshall notes that, "chronic armed conflict in

the world is concentrated on the margins of traditional religions, especially in boundaries

of the Islamic world."[38]

### Unity and Diversity

The scope of this study cannot examine every aspect of theological unity and

diversity of Islam. Yet, for the Combatant Commander, an analysis of regional religious

differences is important for cultural intelligence. Important to the global war on terrorism

is understanding that Islam is not a monolithic religion, therefore Islam and Islamic

militants cannot be viewed under the same lens. Universalism exists in the recognition of

the oneness of Allah as the one most important theological principal in Islam, which literally means "submission," and the five Pillars of Islam (Witnessing-Shahadah; Prayer-Salat; Charity-Zakah; Fasting-Sawm; Pilgrimage-Hajj). These acts are obligatory on every Muslim adult. Some are done daily, monthly, annually, while one is only required once in a lifetime. One thing is evident in this Islam, is that the sacred and the secular are one."[39]

However unified Islam may claim to be, it has suffered numerous factions that have evolved out of a long history of orthodoxy verses heresy, struggle, repression and reform. The battle of the secular, modernist and militant in Islam is evidence of these factions. Therefore, Islam today speaks with many voices with regional idiosyncrasy. The two biggest sects are the Sunnis and the Shi'ites, and the two most influential sects are the Sufis and the Wahhabis. Wahhabism, the sect of Osama Bin Laden, is characteristic of a warrior religion that celebrates the idea of martyrdom. These sects, along with the others, all have a position in defining Islam to the world. These sects and ethnicity help shape the political parties of their countries. For the religious analysis, it is important to recognize the sects in the region and the factors that have combined to create their view of Islam. This is evident in places such as Indonesia, Philippines, Africa, and Pakistan. As the crossroad of the Pacific, Indonesia is the most populous Muslim nation. The tension between modernists and militants is evident throughout the country. Modernists are largely influenced by the Sufi sect, which focuses on an internal spiritual journey rather than seeking to impose their faith on external political realities. Geography, trade and history all influenced the Islamic definition in Indonesia. The understanding of the diversity is critical in strategic analysis, as Barry Rubin elaborates:

The majority of Syrians are Sunni Muslims, but the ruling establishment is overwhelming Alawite. In Syria, Sunnis look down on Alawites, not even considering them Muslims. This religious antagonism is at the center of the internal power struggle in Syria…. In order to forge domestic unity and prove themselves good Arabs and Muslims, the Alawites try to be the most steadfast in fighting Israel and U.S. "imperialism." This reason, among others, is why past U.S. efforts to draw Syria into Arab-Israeli peace talks or to appease Syria in Lebanon (especially in 1982-84) were doomed….Only by understanding these religiopolitical issues to the fullest extent possible can U.S. policy deal effectively with religiously influenced states or with fundamentalism.[40]

## Ideological Underpinning

Beyond unity and diversity, an ideological examination offers an understanding of the significance of the diversity. Study of the ideological underpinnings of terrorism is essential to the global war and requires an investigation into the ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms of various kinds. Religion has many symbolic mechanisms which convey how an individual thinks about himself and how individuals view the world. For the militants, faith offers inner peace, but their action provides the outer justice. Consequently, they often seek symbolic targets to attack. Juergensmeyer notes:

> Part of the attraction of religious ideologies is that they are so personal. They impart a sense of redemption and dignity to those who uphold them….One can view their efforts to demonize their enemies and embrace ideas of cosmic war as attempts at ennoblement and empowerment. Such efforts would be poignant if they were not so horribly destructive.[41]

In light of the destruction of religious motivated terrorism, the religious ideology of terrorism must be examined and considered in the equation of strategic planning. One clear underpinning is that "Religion has provided them the metaphor of a cosmic war, an image of a spiritual struggle that every religion contains within its repository of symbols, seen as the fight between good and evil."[42] The distinction between good and evil has always been an underlying ideology of religion, especially for Islamic militants. The

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terrorists of 11 September 2001 understood their act as a religious one which was

connected to this idea of evil and good. The fatwa, a verdict based on Islamic law, issued

in 1998 by Osama bin Laden ordering the killing of Americans and their allies

underscored this ideology. This moral struggle is appealing and makes the battle more

trans-nationalized. Religion gives people a basic distinction between the believer and

non-believer and life is simplified where "good and evil are brought out in stark relief."[43]

Thus, David C. Rapoport observes:

> All major religions have enormous potentialities for creating and directing
> violence, which is why wars of religion are exceedingly ferocious and difficult to
> resolve. When a religious justification is offered for a cause which might
> otherwise be justified in political or economic terms, struggle is intensified and
> complicated enormously. There are many reasons why this happens, perhaps the
> most important being that religious conflicts involve fundamental values and self-
> definition; and struggles involving questions of identity, notoriously, are the most
> difficult to compromise because they release our greatest passion.[44]

Secondly, for Islamic militants, ideology has a clear sociopolitical agenda that

seeks to inspire and unite Muslims. The rage and hate is integrated into their action which

is where life is transformed. Sterns observes, "When religious terrorist groups form,

ideology and altruism play significant roles. Commitment to the goals of the organization

and the spiritual benefits of contributing to a 'good cause' are sufficient incentives for

many operatives."[45]

Sacred Warriors

These new warriors come armed to wage war with a belief of divine mandate in

order to ensure that their justice and view of true faith will prevail. Their battle is fueled

by hatred and they subsequently disregard any conventional standards of warfare.

> In almost every recent case of religious violence, concepts of cosmic war have
> been accompanied by claims of moral justification. It is not so much that religion
> has become politicized but that politics have become religionized. Through

enduring absolutism, worldly struggles have been lifted into the high proscenium of sacred battle.[46]

This final and critical dimension considers the actions of the Islamic militant which stems from a particular ideology. As there is unity and diversity in individual religions so is there also extremism. This extremism has erupted in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Sikhism. As a resistance to secularism and modernity, Karen Armstrong notes:

> Religious fundamentalism represents a widespread rebellion against the hegemony of secular modernity. Whenever a modern, western-style society has been established, a religious counterculture has developed alongside it in conscious rebellion…. The various fundamentalist ideologies show a worrying disenchantment with modernity and globalization. Indeed, every single fundamentalist movement that I have studied in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is rooted in a profound fear of annihilation.[47]

Every religion has individuals or groups who have interpreted their scripture to arm themselves for a battle of good versus evil.[48] Harmon elaborates, "Religious revolutionaries tend towards apocalyptic visions. When these visions assume concrete political dimensions, they can have grandiose and sometimes violent consequences."[49] This violence is always carried out with a view towards benefiting the individual with an eternal reward making this a powerful enemy. As Bernard Lewis observed, "The suicide bomber may become a metaphor for the whole region."[50] Extremists interpret *jihad* as literal warfare against non-Muslims, and their "weapons system based upon religious dedication."[51] These terrorist acts are in part "to awaken, demonstrate, instruct and inspire."[52]

Another aspect of these warriors is the sense of how they are held captive in a spiral of hate and rage because of the personal feeling of humiliation. Humiliation is an underestimated force in international relations and in particular to the militant,

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humiliation has been brought on from the West. The restoration of pride and dignity is a

condition requiring a jihad. Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad,

observed: "It is better for the youth of Islam to carry arms and defend their religion with

pride and dignity than to submit to this humiliation."[53] This point is evident in the rage

and retaliation of terrorists following the exposure to the abuse from American soldiers at

Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison. In the beheading of an American citizen, terrorists demonstrate

a moral disengagement, as psychologist Albert Bandura notes:

> Self-deplored acts can be made to appear righteous by contrasting them with
> flagrant inhumanities. The more outrageous the comparison practices, the more
> likely it is that one's own destructive conduct will appear trifling or even
> benevolent. Thus, terrorists minimize their slaying as the only defensive weapon
> they have to curb the widespread cruelties inflicted on their people.[54]

For the Islamic militant, there is no negotiation because, in part, these actions are

tied to Islamic history. This validates the struggle and impedes any course for

compromise. The terrorists of September 11th had a booklet of instructions in which the

first four pages recalled Islamic history and Muhammad's struggles.[55] As David C.

Rapoport observed:

> The sacred terrorists believe that their ends and means were sanctioned by divine
> authority, which humans had no right to alter. Whereas their modern secular
> counterparts are concerned with the future, the sacred terrorists' eyes are on the
> past—on the particular precedents established in the religion's most holy era, the
> founding period when deity and community were on the most intimate terms and
> when the basic rules of the religion were established.[56]

### V) Recommendation for the Combatant Commander

As the Combatant Commander continually audits the environment and various

threats in the global war on terrorism, it is imperative to remember that religion as a

dimension defines the enemy's motivation, mentality and warfare posture. Considering

these will enhance the analysis of knowing the type of war and knowing the enemy.

The **first** area is to remember that this global war on terrorism is an ideological war. To wage effective warfare is to battle the ideological underpinnings of terrorism. Islamic militants view themselves as warriors fighting the ongoing struggle of Muhammad. They believe time is on their side and that that this is a global quest. They seek to unite all Muslims in the struggle. This war cannot be thought of in conventional linear strategic thought because their "strategic objectives do not dictate specific actions—the objective is action."[57]

A **second** area is to remember that there are regional idiosyncrasies in Islam and that emphasis needs to be on the "cultural intelligence." As General Zinni noted, "We can't take a blanket micromanagement position because within a few miles religion, and cultural issues change."[58] The emphasis on cultural intelligence is critical to the growing need for new intelligence for the global war on terrorism. This implies that an analysis needs to examine and understand the causal relationship of religion from a non-Western perspective lest we repeat historical miscalculations.

A **third** area to remember is the martyrdom dynamic as it plays against the notion of overwhelming force. Martyrdom looks for the heavenly reward. Jessica Sterns observes that "violence is a cleansing force which frees the oppressed youth from his inferiority complex, despair and inaction, making him fearless and restoring his self respect."[59] Conference table negotiation is not a phase of the Jihad. Islamic militants will not be forced to any middle ground or compromise from overwhelming force because "the prospect of playing a seeming heroic role can persuade young men to become ruthless killers in service of bad ideas."[60] As the former federal prosecutor in the 1993

World Trade Center bombings, Henry J. DePippo noted: "These are people who are trying to make a statement, so punishment, however severe, wouldn't be a deterrent."[61]

The **fourth** area to remember is that any attempt to win the war of ideas must not underestimate the feelings of humiliation and subsequent rage to amend this deficiency that currently pervades the Islamic world. Islamic militants see this Jihad as the motive to give them justice. Establishing reliable partnerships is one way to deal with the ideology and win the war of ideas. It is important to maximize these partnerships so it is not just America who is communicating the message. In post-war strategy, understand need to reverse the poverty of dignity.

## Conclusion

The face of religion has emerged on the battlefield of this Global War on Terrorism, and for a terrorist to sanction his actions by divine mandate makes for a dangerous and powerful enemy. As noted by Fredrick the Great in 1747, "Religion becomes a dangerous arm when one knows how to make use of it."[62] For the Islamic militant religion involves more than a justification for war, but a source of moral support, a basis for regulating conflict and a guide for their "military" planning.[63] Consequently, the religious militant will not go away, is not easily deterred, is strategic minded and will search for new ways to threaten, disrupt and destroy their enemy. For all the areas to consider in a strategic estimate the recognition of the regional religious dimension offers the Combatant Commander insight that cannot be ignored. Stanton Burnett, senior advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, states:

> Strategic thinking needs information, analysis, and insight—insight from all relevant sources contributing to an understanding of all human interaction. It needs the capacity to predict, but predictions about the person or the community that is playing by different rules….An incapacity to see, understand, and make

proper use of spiritual/religious factors will involve even higher future costs because of an increase in the number of conflicts and instances of political turmoil in which these phenomena will be an important part of either the problem or the solution, usually both. U.S. diplomacy, by consciously widening its vision, can achieve much greater suppleness and effectiveness.[64]

The Combatant Commander is confronted with a demand for new intelligence in this Global War on Terrorism. Religious diversity as a factor in current and future conflicts is unlikely to remain static and the failure to consider religion as a dimension could prove disastrous for strategists and planners.

[1]Peter L. Berger, "The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview," in The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics, ed. Peter L. Berger (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999), 18.

[2]Jeffrey B. White, "Some Thoughts on Irregular Warfare," Studies in Intelligence 39-5 (1996): 52.

[3]George W. Bush, "Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11" (Address to a Joint Session of Congress delivered at United States Capitol, Washington, DC, September 20, 2001); available from www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/

[4]Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, ed./trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 88.

[5]Ralph Peters, "Rolling Back Radical Islam," Parameters 32(Autumn 2002): 4.

[6]Mark Juergensmeyer, quoted in Bruce Murray, "Getting Inside the Minds of Religious Militants" (May 10, 2004): 1; available from http://www.facsnet.org/issues/faith/juergen/php.

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